

THE GOTHIC QUEST
A HISTORY OF THE GOTHIC NOVEL

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PLATE I



Engraved by Ridley from a Picture by Drummond

M. G. LEWIS Esq. M.P.

AUTHOR OF THE MONK.

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MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS
Ætate, 21

[Frontispiece

THE GOTHIC QUEST

A HISTORY OF THE GOTHIC NOVEL

by

MONTAGUE SUMMERS

THE FORTUNE PRESS
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LONDON

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INTRODUCTION

My love for the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe dates from my very first years. Among my earliest recollections is an edition of her Works in one rather formidable fat volume, double-columned—which offered no difficulties then—and embellished with woodcuts that were a perpetual delight, not least because of their close affinity to the plays of Webb and Pollock of which one was giving nightly performances. Bound in dull black morocco, gilt-tooled, Mrs. Radcliffe lived on the summit of the highest shelves in a sombre and shadowy but by no means large old library, where the books stood ranged in very neat rows in tall mahogany cases behind heavy glass doors. Most sections were locked and keyless, but the particular bookcase whence Mrs. Radcliffe could be reached by mounting upon a chair and stretching rather far was always left unfastened, as I suppose containing standard literature and works approved for general and uncensored perusal, Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope, Marryat, Fenimore Cooper, Lingard, Miss Strickland, Prescott, and the more sober historians. *Tom Jones*, I remember, was banished to the remotest altitudes, and jailed beyond all hope of release. What a day it was—diem numera meliore lapillo, as old Persius bids—that day when I discovered how an alien key would fit the bookcase locks!

I now recognize that I began my acquaintance with Mrs. Radcliffe—an acquaintance that was soon to warm into affection and then to love—from Limbird's edition of 1824. A schoolboy friend—we were not in our 'teens—lent me a copy of *The Bravo of Venice* he had picked up on some twopenny stall. *The Monk* was not to follow until some years later. Next I was attracted by a title, *Manfroné*; or, *The One-Handed Monk*, the four volumes of which I espied in a dingy little shop, and soon proudly possessed for one shilling. Thus I may be said to have been fairly started on my Gothic career. Very early too do I remember *Horrid Mysteries*, to which I did not make my way viâ Jane Austen, for when I came to read *Northanger Abbey*, how delighted I was to find the recommendation of sweet Miss Andrews.

In the mid-nineties there lived not far from my home an ancient lady,—she must then have been nearer her eightieth than her seventieth year—who yet retained all her faculties in a most surprising manner. Her house, small and thoroughly old-fashioned, and exceedingly comfortable, contained a numerous collection of books, and the bulk of these consisted of long-forgotten romances with which she was most intimately familiar, which she read occasionally even then, of which she was always ready to talk, and which she was ever willing-kind soul!—to lend. When quite young, hardly more than twenty years old, I suppose, she had been married to a gentleman very greatly her senior. As a youth he lived in London, he had written some verse, a closet drama or two (printed but never acted), and at least one fiction which appeared anonymously from the house of Newman. He had mixed in literary circles and personally known not a few of the writers whose duodecimos crowded those tight-packed shelves. His widow, whose memory remained excellent and clear, often spoke of Harriet Lee, Jane Porter, Charles Lucas, William Child Green, Robert Huish, Hannah Jones, Eleanor Sleath, some of whom she had herself met, some of whom she knew from her husband's anecdotes and reminiscences. How often have I since wished that I had taken note of her tea-table talk, or that her husband's diaries and papers had been preserved.

I may add that she died rather suddenly, and being myself in Italy at the time, I only heard of her decease through correspondence. The estate went to distant relatives, who had little or no interest in her branch of the family. The books, accounted mere lumber, were dispersed; the letters and personal papers were all destroyed.

Thirty-five years ago, indeed, the fiction of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was with few exceptions regarded as the veriest druff of the shelves, universally and most deservedly and for ever forgotten. It is true that W. Nicholson & Sons of Wakefield (late of Halifax) reprinted in their "Cottager's Library" at one shilling a volume *The Children of the Abbey*, Mrs. Helme's *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest* and *St. Clair of the Isles*, Charlotte Smith's *Ethelinde, or, The Recluse of the Lake*, and even *Fatherless Fanny*, and Mrs. Ward's *The Cottage on the Cliff* with its sequel *The Fisher's Daughter*. But such books were literally for the peasant and the poor. Milner reprinted *Manfroné*, of which romance (perhaps because of the fudge attribution to Mrs. Radcliffe) there was an edition at least as late as 1870. *The Children of the Abbey* and *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest* were included by Milner both in his "Two Shilling Red Library" and "One Shilling Red and Blue Library." *St. Clair of the Isles* was in the "One Shilling

Red and Blue Library." Other Gothic flotsam might be traced. I can call to mind a sixpenny edition of *The Children of the Abbey* in 1890. Mrs. Roche's novel, indeed, was immensely popular, and had been issued time after time. Mrs. Helme's two favourite romances, also, maintained their place in a sixpenny series. Now and again, moreover, there had been published a poor edition of some novel by Mrs. Radcliffe. *The Monk*, generally under the title *Rosario*, and more fully *Rosario, or, The Female Monk*, was circulated as a work of semipornography in surreptitious sniggering fashion, and presented on vile paper with execrable type in the cheapest flimsiest wrappers.

It may be that I shall be reminded how in 1891 was issued (Percival & Co.) "The Pocket Library of English Literature," a collection, in separate 16mo volumes, of extracts and short pieces. Volume I, bearing the title "Tales of Mystery," consisted of fragments from Mrs. Radcliffe, Lewis and Maturin. The experiment was not well conceived, and but poorly executed. Mrs. Radcliffe, Lewis and Maturin do not lend themselves to selection and cannot be read in parcels and samples.

In Chapter III of *Melmoth the Wanderer*, when Stanton is confined in the madhouse and Melmoth so mysteriously appears, to tempt him with a fearful bargain, the wretched victim "heard his heart beat audibly, and could have exclaimed with Lee's unfortunate heroine,— "It pants as cowards do before a battle; Oh the great march has sounded!" Upon this the editor of "Tales of Mystery" (p. 315) observes: "All Lee's heroines are as unfortunate as they can possibly be. This might be Statira, or Narcissa, or any of them, and I have not yet identified her: though I spent some time in endeavouring to do so." It may be worth while, then, to point out that the lines thus quoted by Maturin are spoken by the dying Semandra in *Mithridates, King of Pontus*, Act V; 4to, 1678, p. 64:

Ziphares.	Speak, speak, Semandra. I feel a trembling warmth about thy heart: It pants.
Semandra.	As Cowards do before a Battel. Oh, the Great March is sounded.

On April 11th, 1891, *The Saturday Review*, speaking of "A Forgotten Writer," remarked: "It may safely be said that not one reader in a hundred, unless he be a close student of Balzac, or the literature of the English stage, has ever heard of the author of *Melmoth the Wanderer*. References to him in Byron's letters are passed over without comment, and few histories of literature do more than chronicle his existence."

Balzac's *Melmoth Reconcilié* appeared in 1835. Edmund Kean won a great success as Bertram in Maturin's *Bertram, or the Castle of St. Aldobrand*, which was produced at Drury Lane on May 9th, 1816, and achieved a run of twenty-two nights, being, moreover, very frequently revived with applause. On Whit Monday, 1847, during his third season at Sadler's Wells, Phelps played Bertram, "and in some parts of it was very fine." The tragedy was revived at the Marylebone Theatre as late as 1853. First published by Murray in 1816, *Bertram* went through seven editions that year.

In 1892, at the suggestion of Walter Pollock, *Melmoth the Wanderer* was reprinted, Three Volumes, Richard Bentley & Son, cura Robert Ross and More Adey. Unfortunately this excellent edition attracted no notice.

It should, perhaps, be mentioned in passing that a German scholar or two, delving into the dustiest corners of English literature for a thesis, were not unnaturally attracted to the English *Schauerromantik*, but their academic dissertations have little, if any, value. They are often inaccurate, they give us nothing new, and here they arouse scant interest. Such were *The Gothic Romance* of Hans Möbius, Leipzig 1902; Max Rentsch's *Matthew Gregory Lewis. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung seines Romans "Ambrosio or The Monk,"* Leipzig, 1902; Willy Müller's *Charles Robert Maturin's Romane "The fatal Revenge" und "Melmoth the Wanderer."* Ein Beitrag zur Gothic Romance, Weida, 1908; and Oscar F. W. Fernsemer's *Die Dramatischen Werke Charles Robert Maturins, mit einer kurzen Lebensbeschreibung des Dichters*, München 1913.

Well might Andrew Lang in *The Cornhill Magazine*, July, 1900, so plaintively inquire: "Does anyone now read Mrs. Radcliffe, or am I the only wanderer in her windy corridors, listening timidly to groan and hollow voices, and shielding the flame of a lamp, which, I fear, will presently flicker out, and leave me in darkness?"

When in January, 1917, I lectured before the Royal Society of Literature upon *A Great Mistress of Romance: Ann Radcliffe, 1764-1823* (printed in *The Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature: Second Series*, Volume XXXV), the subject was considered something quite new. In a subsequent lecture (printed *ibid.*, Volume XXXVI) delivered before the same Body on October 24th, 1917, the Jane Austen Centenary Lecture, I particularly emphasized the Northanger Novels, the seven romances of which mention is made in Chapter V. of the First Volume of *Northanger Abbey*.

In his *Mainly Victorian*, 1925, my friend the late Mr. S. M. Elliott reprinted an article from *The Contemporary Review*, February, 1923

which he had written for the centenary of Ann Radcliffe, and whilst attention had already begun to concentrate upon things Victorian it also became evident that the Gothic Romance was fast coming into vogue among the inner circles of the advanced and elect.

How far indeed there is any true appreciation and understanding of the Gothic Novel among its latest admirers, how far there exists any actual knowledge is a question. It is significant that the Introduction to the most recent cheap reprint of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* was furnished by a popular writer of detective fiction.

I may perhaps remark that this present work was originally planned, and in great part actually written as long as five and twenty years ago.

It was in 1924 that I edited *The Castle of Otranto* and *The Mysterious Mother*. In 1927 I projected a series of the seven Northanger Novels, of which, however, only *Horrid Mysteries* and *The Necromancer of the Black Forest* were published. *The Mysterious Warning* was privately printed. In 1928 I edited *Zofloya*, by Charlotte Dacre, whom I had previously made the subject of a particular study in my *Essays in Petto*.

It was inevitable that the Gothic Romance should attract the attention of the academic and the amateur, and that itching pens should rush in to attack this theme. The majority of such studies are obviously "crammed" stuff; hastily conceived, ill directed, badly written theses, a deplorably jejune output of the Universities. Moreover, as was pointed out in a notice of what is probably quite the worst and most feckless of these dissertations (reviewed in *The Times Literary Supplement*, May 17th, 1934), our undergraduates and sophomores are hampered, and something more than hampered, by the fact that they have not access to sufficient material, and in consequence such titans are apt to analyse *in extenso* some quite negligible novel whilst they ignore, because they have no knowledge of, romances which are really significant and historically important. Thus they have no critical perspective, and their information is soon seen to be undependable and insincere, at the very best to have been acquired second-hand, if indeed they reach so far, from *The Critical Review*, *The Monthly Review*, and Watt's *Bibliotheca Britannica*.

In refreshing contrast to these banalities we welcome such a work as Mr. Niilo Idman's *Charles Robert Maturin*, in which the writer is not only in sympathy with, and indeed discreetly enthusiastic for, his subject, but in which moreover he affords ample evidence of real research, of original reading and judgement.

Baroque and Gothic Sentimentalism, which first appeared in an Oxford magazine, *Farrago*, No. 3, October, 1930, and in a revised form was published separately in February, 1931, is a thoughtful and suggestive

Essay by my late friend Peter Burra, who was keenly interested in the Gothic period.

Although the heyday of the Gothic Novel in England may be said to have flourished during the 1790's, I shall hope to show in a further study that it remained immensely popular and how its influence extended far later than is generally supposed, until indeed it was absorbed, essentially unchanged, in the pages of Bulwer Lytton, Harrison Ainsworth, George Herbert Rodwell, and G. W. M. Reynolds; nay, even later yet in the romances of Malcolm J. Erryn, Margaret Blount, and Eliza Winstanley, as in the far finer work of Le Fanu, Miss Braddon, Florence and Gertrude Warden.

The Gothic Novel with its romantic unrealities, its strange beauties and its very extravagances—if you will—was to a great extent the Novel of Escape from the troubles and carking cases of everyday life. Men weary of fiction which, clever and pointed as the strokes might be, presented too nearly the world almost as they saw it around them. Sidney Bidulph and Lady Barton were found to be distressing; the heroines of Mrs. Lennox, Henrietta and Euphemia; Mrs. Gibbes, Sukey Thornby; George Walker's Cinthelia; were all voted ordinary. The novel of real life to achieve complete success must have mingled with it something of surprise, something of romance. There was nobody more adroit in supplying this blend than Mrs. Charlotte Smith. In her *The Old Manor House* (1793), although the *Critical Review* might complain that the housekeeper's niece, Monimia, remained in the end precisely what she was at the beginning, whereas the reader had a right to expect she would prove to be "a very different personage," Mrs. Smith has presented her rambling old Hampshire mansion, its mysterious sights and sounds, its antique and deserted rooms, its secret passages haunted by smugglers, an estate so imperiously ruled by high and haughty chatelaine, Mrs. Rayland, the last daughter of a lord and lordly line, with as fully Gothic a flavour as though it were a frowning castle in the awful heart of the Apennines or an eyrie conveyed in the remotest Abruzzi where some harsh and despot abbess held her sovran sway, unquestioned and uncontrolled.

Celestina (1791), *Montalbert* (1795), Mrs. Parsons' *Lucy* (1794), the anonymous *Eloise de Montblanc* (1796), Charles Lucas' *The Castle of St. Donats* (1798), Mrs. Roche's *The Children of the Abbey* (1798), and to come to a later date the same lady's *The Tradition of the Castle* (1824) are notable examples of this kind, romances whose titles I have picked just at random.

The novel of domestic life with its Richardsonian sensibilities and the didactic novel of course persisted, nor would it be difficult to quote

not a few important names, as, for instance, Mrs. Inchbald's *A Simple Story* (1791, but written some fourteen years earlier), Cumberland's *Henry* (1795), Mrs. Helme's *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest* (1796), and Mrs. Bennett's admired *The Beggar Girl and her Benefactors* (1798). Mrs. Parsons, Mrs. Roche, Lathom, even Maturin, who it has been said so amply "earned his title to the Headship of the School of Terror," and many more (but not, be it noted, Mrs. Radcliffe), wrote domestic as well as romantic tales. Yet if served with Gothic sauce the domestic novel was generally considered far more appetizing fare.

The explanation is that both at home and abroad dark shadows were lowering; the times were difficult, full of anxiety and unrest; there was a sense of dissatisfaction to-day and of apprehension for the morrow; there were wars and rumours of wars. Readers sought some counter-excitement, and to many the novel became a precious anodyne. There is something in this which may be closely paralleled at the present time, and never before than now were readers so greedy for "fictional anæsthetics." The modern public has been frankly debauched by a surfeit of crime fiction and "Thrillers," which belie their very name and fail most lamentably in their function, since for the most part they are of the lineage of *The Lady Flabella*, and there is not a line in them, "from beginning to end, which could, by the most remote contingency, awaken the smallest excitement in any person breathing." I do not speak of the spate of nameless scribblers, but I have in mind "detective novels" and "thrillers" by authors who are brazenly boosted and boomed, and I believe that there is no uglier symptom to-day than the shameless blazoning of such unhealthy and unwholesome rubbish. These novels are unhealthy and unwholesome not because of their subjects, however coarse and crude, but because they are bad to rottenness in their conception, in their execution, in their presentation. The spineless detective novel, the "thriller" which cannot thrill, are the most useless, the most worthless and most boring books of any sort or kind.

I may perhaps claim to have read a very fair number of Gothic romances, but so far as my knowledge extends not even the poorest and most erratic novel of that school sinks to a bathos within measurable distance of the dull draff which amongst us is so puffed and advertised amain.

Setting aside such masterpieces as *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*, no small pleasure may be derived from mystery and detective novels of the second or even the third rate. They are often absurd, but 'tis an enviable relaxation to seek the answer to the riddle, and many a happy hour have I spent by the fireside all agog to know Who

did the murder? or, Who stole the jewels? This candid acknowledgment of weakness, for it is a weakness, will make it plain that so far from having any sort of prejudice against detective novels, I can enjoy them with gusto. The good "thriller" is most excellent fare. To-day the good detective novels which I light upon are few and far between. The bad detective novels, the bad "thrillers" which flood the land nauseate and abhor as the ultimate degradation of letters.

I regret that in the following pages I have barely been able to touch upon the vogue of the Gothic Romance in France, where "tout décor du gothique anglais paraît se retrouver." Fortunately the Gothic influence is being dealt with by Mons. Maurice Heine, whose two valuable articles *Le Marquis de Sade et le Roman Noir* and *Promenade à travers le Roman noir* lead us eagerly to await a fuller study from his pen.

Even in England alone so vast is the field that an explorer may well hesitate before he ventures. The present work in fine is the outcome of more than forty years of reading Gothic romances, and more than thirty years of definite concentration and research, a labour, not light but of love, often and seriously interrupted by duty and inquiry in other fields. The quantity of Gothic material alone at once presents a Gordian dilemma. Either in the endeavour to cover all the ground the writer will show himself superficial and thin; or else he must select and that somewhat arbitrarily, whence his plan will be open to criticism. The former is facile enough yet not always easy to answer. This latter method, since a choice had to be made, I have preferred, although fully conscious that such an approach is not without difficulties and drawbacks, which must be as far as possible obviated and counterchecked.

In a second volume, then, I propose to treat in detail the work of Mrs. Radcliffe, Mrs. Charlotte Smith, Mrs. Parsons, Mrs. Roche, Mrs. Meeke, Mrs. Helme, Mrs. Bennett, Godwin, Charlotte Dacre, Jane Austen, Anna Maria Porter, Mrs. Shelley, Maturin, Robert Huish, Charles Lucas, Mrs. Yorke, Catherine Ward, and very many more, the central place being, of course, held by "the mighty magician of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*."

It is my intention further to publish a Bibliography of the Gothic Novel.

In the present volume I have elected to deal mainly with the aspects of Gothic Romance which in some sense find their fullest expression in the work of that most notable and significant figure, Matthew Gregory Lewis.

One reason, perhaps, which inclined me to this course is that while both Mrs. Radcliffe and Maturin have formed the subject of particular studies, there is no work (if we except the hundred-year-old and

very satisfactory *Life and Correspondence of M. G. Lewis*) which concentrates upon Lewis alone, and Lewis not merely in his literary output but in his life is a character of extraordinary interest, and, I will add of an influence that is not exhausted even to-day. It may not be unfitting to remind ourselves that his fantasticisms, his absurdities if you will, were those of his time from which no man can wholly scape, that his power and his genius were his own, and of a quality to which both Scott and Byron bore testimony with no uncertain meed of praise.

Not long ago I was asked a curious question: Did Matthew Gregory Lewis really believe in ghosts? Shelley said that Lewis at times "did not seem to believe in them," but this scepticism was very superficial, for bold as he might be in the broad daylight, when darkness and loneliness fell the "Monk" obviously thought "more respectfully of the world of shadows." Lewis certainly confided to Byron that before any important crisis in his life, especially before any untoward happening, he was visited (as in warning) by the shade of his brother Barrington. In Chapter V I have quoted, as Medwin reports, two ghost stories which Lewis was wont to relate, and, there can be no reason to doubt, which he firmly believed, the haunted house at Mannheim and the Florentine lovers. In Shelley's *Journal* will be found "four other stories—all grim" that Lewis loved to tell. Of these, three (as is known from other sources) are absolutely authentic. For the tales themselves see Mrs. Shelley's *Essays Letters from Abroad*, 1840, and Shelley's complete *Works*, edited Ingpen and Peck, 1929, Vol. VI, pp. 147-50.

It gives me great pleasure to thank Mr. Michael Sadleir, a high authority upon the Gothic Novel as in many other fields of literature, for so courteously permitting me to quote in Chapter II from his published work. Especially am I indebted to him for his kindness in bringing to my notice and supplying me in regard to these points with many new and important details, which he has established in the course of his more recent investigations.

Mr. W. Gaunt's *Bandits in a Landscape*, a study of Romantic Painting, from Caravaggio to Delacroix, is not only a delightful book in itself, but a most valuable companion to any who desire to understand how the Gothic spirit found expression in art; and to a real appreciation of Romanticism such knowledge is essential. The anonymous author of *An Epistle in Rhyme to M. G. Lewis*, 1798, writes:

Thou not'est, like Radcliffe, with a painter's eye
The pine-clad mountains, and the stormy sky,
And at thy bidding, to my wondering view
Rise the bold scenes Salvator's pencil drew . . .

Mrs. Radcliffe, who was indeed a painter in words, used to name Salvator Rosa and Claude Lorraine as her favourite artists. Chapter on both these masters will be found in Mr. Gaunt's study, from which he has generously allowed me to make quotation.

The claims put forward by the Surrealists that their new movement is influenced by and draws vital inspiration from the Gothic romances are sufficiently surprising to necessitate an inquiry into the significance and quality of this connexion—if indeed any such there be. I have accordingly added a brief survey of the arguments they urge in support of their contention, and attempted to arrive at some understanding of their aims and principles.

To Mons. Maurice Heine, a great authority upon "le roman noir," I desire to express my heartiest thanks for the time and trouble he has so generously given to discussing with me the influence of the Gothic Novel in France. I am especially obliged to him for clearing up by his researches many obscure points concerning that multitude of authors whose romances, "démodés, furent dédaignés par les philosophes, les humbles bouquinistes, vendus au poids comme vieux papiers, détruits en grand nombre," and of which in consequence (as in England) exemplars have become of the very last rarity.

I have to thank the Editor of *The Connoisseur*, Mr. Granville Fennell, for the kind loan of blocks for those of the Illustrations which accompanied my article "The Illustrations of the 'Gothick' Novels," *The Connoisseur*, November, 1936, as also for permission to quote from my previous work.

During the course of my work, Mr. Hector Stuart-Forbes has ungrudgingly helped me by his fruitful and valuable suggestions, by his valuable and fruitful criticism, and in many more ways beside than I am able adequately to acknowledge.

MONTAGUE SUMMERS.

THE GOTHIC QUEST

CHAPTER I

THE ROMANTIC FEELING.

As for novels, there are some I would strongly recommend, but romances infinitely more. The one is a representation of the effects of the passions as they should be, the other as they are. The latter is falsely called nature; it is a figure of corrupt or depraved society. The other is the glow of nature.

SHERIDAN.

Le romantisme, c'est l'étoile qui pleure, c'est le vent qui vagit, c'est la nuit qui frissonne.

DE MUSSET.

LITERATURE in every age presents itself under one of two forms, neither of which can ever be arbitrary or accidental, since both, however separate in their tendencies and aims have their roots deep down in man's philosophical or religious speculation. In the one case literature expresses and discusses under various shapes, as elegantly and masterly as its exponents are able, the prevailing ideas concerning the problems, material and metaphysical, of the current hour. It is a clear reflection, and brightly burnished is the mirror, of everyday life. The common man, to take a phrase from Dr. Johnson, "feels what he remembers to have felt before, but he feels it with a great increase of sensibility." He is pleased because he finds the fleet yet haunting thoughts he was seeking to disentangle and digest in his own mind are set out before him in order, far better than he himself could have arranged his ideas. The answers to the problems and the conclusions may not be such as he approves or would accept, but no matter, the inquiry has been made, and even by his mere regard, his reading the pages quite cursorily, he feels that he has in some sort taken his individual part and had a main share in the argument.

On the other hand literature may lead a man away from life, as it were, that is to say it may direct him from the long and often fruitless

contemplation of the circumstances which surround him, his journey work, to many distasteful, monotonous to most, and invite his attention to other realities and aspirations, flinging wide

Magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

This is the essence of the romantic spirit. Romanticism weans our thought and care from the sordid practicalities of the repeated round it offers us a wider and fuller vision; and it is therefore subjective, it is reactionary in its revolt against the present since it yearns for the loveliness of the past as so picturesquely revealed to us in art and poem; and informed by a passionate desire for the beautiful, which can never be entirely satisfied but is always craving for more, it must by its very nature remain always unappeased, that is to say in some sense dimly seeking adventure in the realms of the mind, intellectual, restless and aspiring.

Walter Pater wrote: "It is the addition of strangeness to beauty that constitutes the Romantic character in art. . . . It is the addition of curiosity to the desire of beauty that constitutes the Romantic temper. . . . The essential elements, then of the Romantic spirit are curiosity and the love of beauty; and it is as the accidental effects of these qualities only that it seeks the middle age."¹ "The ages are equal," says William Blake, "but genius is always above its age," and Romanticism is beyond it.

[Romanticism is, in effect, a supernaturalism, and the highest form of Romanticism, in its purest and best endeavour, raised upwards to the sublime, is Mysticism.² Indeed some definitions of Mysticism would well nigh serve for Romanticism, although of course we have passed from literature to an even higher sphere.³ Von Hartmann, however, extends the name of mystic to "eminent art-geniuses who owe their productions to inspirations of genius, and not to the workings of their consciousness, e.g. Phidias, Æschylus, Raphael, Beethoven," since "Mysticism is the filling of the consciousness with a content (feeling, thought, desire), by an involuntary emergence of the same out of the unconscious." Bouchitté pregnantly observes: "Mysticism consists in giving to the spontaneity of the intelligence a larger part than to the other faculties." Dean Inge has a very striking and pertinent passage: "The phase of thought or feeling which we call Mysticism has its origin in that which is the raw material of all religion, and perhaps of all philosophy and art as well, namely, that dim consciousness of the *beyond*, which is part of our nature as human beings."⁴

Romanticism is literary Mysticism.

J.-K. Huysmans has said: "Le tout est de savoir s'y prendre, de savoir concentrer son esprit sur un seul point, de savoir s'abstraire suffisamment pour amener l'hallucination et pouvoir substituer le rêve de la réalité à la réalité même." It is interesting to recall how he had concluded the *Avant-Propos* to the second edition⁵ of *Marthe* with the following profession: "Je fais ce que je vois, ce que je sens et ce que j'ai vécu, en l'écrivant du mieux que je puis, et voilà tout. Cette explication n'est pas une excuse, c'est simplement la constatation du but que je poursuis en art."

Romanticism is generally contrasted with Classicism, but this can only hold good when the latter term is narrowed to apply merely to treatment and form, and not to subject-matter. It is true that in English literature the classical writers, by whom pre-eminently are to be understood the Augustans of the reign of Queen Anne, resolutely limited their themes, and as in their own religious beliefs, worship, and respectable devotional practice they had deliberately and with care reduced the supernatural to a cipher so they resolutely excluded all feelings of Mystery and Awe, all gentle enthusiasm,⁶ chiaroscuro, and supernatural imagination from their literature. They thought that they were following Horace; their master, as a matter of fact, was Boileau. They aimed at an elegant and correct serenity; they achieved a systematized and monotonous frigidity.

The motto, indeed, of the Augustan Classicists was "Follow Nature," which sounds not a little surprising until we ask what they meant by "Nature," and then we discover that to them *Nature* implied nothing more than the cold business of plain Common-Sense, as they conceived it. They wished to reproduce upon entirely stereotyped and didactic lines the manners and landscape they observed around them, and they were bitterly opposed to any irregularity, anything emotional and disturbing, or evoked by a vivid imagination. Hence the formal adjective, the thrice-chimed rhyme, the trite metaphor, the threadbare trope—they all saw, or essayed to see with the same eyes.

Genius, although it could not break through, at least might inform these limitations in its own way, and, even if trammelled by the convention of admired models and academic rule, it did not suffer its own brilliance to be extinguished or eclipsed. Unhappily genius is rare, and talents albeit of a high order were chilled to mediocrity and emulation by the rigid principles and dogma of a tyrant authority.

Alexander Pope was the one great poetic genius of his day, and there is more romanticism in Pope than either he or his disciples would have cared to admit. In 1716 when writing to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu with unusual frankness he says: "The more I examine my

own mind, the more romantic I find myself. . . . Let them say I am romantic ; so is every one said to be that either admires a fine thing or praises one ; it is no wonder such people are thought mad, for they are as much out of the way of common understanding as if they were mad, because they are in the right." ⁷ Romanticism here has not indeed as yet quite the full richness of meaning it later developed, but Pope means that he prefers the content of an exquisite sensibility, the reverie of imagination which suggests pictures of beauty and inspires loveliness not to be discerned in daily life, to the clear cold vision that sees things precisely as they are, or rather as they appear to the prosaic and unvaried mind. It is not impertinent to recall an anecdote I have often heard George Moore tell. One day when Corot was painting *en plein air* a pupil looking at the canvas said : "Maître, it is superb. But where do you see all this beauty ?" "There," replied Corot with a wave of the hand to the woods and sky before him. Once at a dinner at Bourguival Degas, looking at some large trees massed in shadow, exclaimed : "How beautiful they would be if Corot had painted them !"

No whole-hearted or single-minded Classicist—using the word strictly in the Augustan sense—could have conceived and builded that delicious 'Ægerian grot' at Twickenham, the *Museum* in which Pope took so much pleasure and so much pride. It was at the end of 1717, just after his father's death that Pope bought his Twickenham estate, and Martin Blount declared that from first to last in gems, shells and lucent spar he spent no less than a thousand pounds upon the Grotto, which was originally devised to avoid the necessity of crossing the high road from Twickenham to Teddington, when the poet was desirous of rambling through the whole extent of his gardens. Minerals, stones, and ornaments came from Mount Vesuvius, the Hartz Mountains, Mexico, the West Indies, Italian quarries of marble, Cornish mines, and even from the stalactite caves of Wookey Hole to adorn the Grotto, and Bishop Warburton remarks that "the beauty of Pope's poetic genius appears to as much advantage in the disposition of these romantic materials as in any of his best contrived poems." ⁸ It was, as Pope desired, "a study for virtuosi and a scene for contemplation." Even now the Grotto remains, although alas ! long since despoiled of its ornaments. The poet thus describes it in a letter to Edward Blount, June 20, 1725 : "From the river Thames you see thro' my arch up a walk into the wilderness, to a kind of open temple, wholly composed of shells in the rustic manner, and from that distance under the temple you look down through a sloping arcade of trees, and see the sails on the river passing suddenly and vanishing as through a perspective glass. When

you shut the doors of this grotto it becomes on the instant, from a luminous room, a camera-obscura ; on the walls of which all objects of the river, hills, woods, and boats are forming a moving picture in their visible radiations. . . . It is furnished with shells interspersed with pieces of looking-glass in regular forms ; and in the ceiling is a star of the same material, at which, when a lamp (of an orbicular figure of thin alabaster) is hung in the middle, a thousand pointed rays glitter, and are reflected over the place. . . . You'll think I have been very poetical in this description, but it is pretty near the truth." Here we have a baroque romanticism no genuine Augustan would have tolerated for a moment.

Pope may not untruly be said to be more than 'romantic' in one poem at least, for there are lines and whole passages of *Eloisa to Abelard* ¹⁰ which show such Gothic influences as might almost be paralleled in Mrs. Radcliffe herself. Even the opening strikes this note :

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heav'nly-pensive contemplation dwells,
And ever-musing melancholy reigns ; . . .
Shrines ! where their vigils pale-cy'd virgins keep,
And pitying Saints, whose statues learn to weep !

The following lines have not a little of the pale spirit of Monk Lewis :

See in her cell sad Eloisa spread,
Propt on some tomb, a neighbour of the dead.
In each low wind methinks a Spirit calls,
And more than Echoes talk along the walls.
Here, as I watch'd the dying lamps around,
From yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound.
"Come, sister, come !" (it said, or seem'd to say)
"Thy place is here, sad sister, come away !"

True, the form is the classic couplet, so-called, but the expression and the feeling are Gothic to a degree.) One line, indeed, Pope has taken entire from Crashaw, the metaphysical, the mystic :

Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep.

These exquisite and pregnant words occur in the *Description of a Religious House and Condition of Life*.

We have then a Poem which is classical in form, but—to a very large extent at any rate—in its theme and matter intensely romantic, for the Gothic influence is the very osmazome of quintessential romanticism. We are now near concluding that classicism is a question of form, a circumstance extremely important in itself, for if definite

forms be prescribed by the critical canon and it is found that certain subject-matter can hardly, or at best, very awkwardly, be cast in those straitly ordained patterns and moulds, at no very distant date all such difficult and intractable material will be discarded and deemed uncouth, extravagant, and unfit for use.

The contrast and the contest are not then so much between classicism and romanticism, for this resolves itself into a discussion concerning form and the consequences, as between realism and romanticism, a passage which seeks to decide the legitimate sphere of artistic treatment, and this cuts something deeper. The real root of the whole business, stripped of logomachy and all its trappings, lies in the eternal jar between materialism and the Supernatural.

In *The Confessions of a Young Man*¹¹ George Moore said: "One thing cannot be denied to the realists: a constant and intense desire to write well, to write artistically. . . . What Hugo did for French verse, Flaubert, Goncourt, Zola, and Huysmans have done for French prose. No more literary school than the realists has ever existed, and I do not except even the Elizabethans." Upon which we comment that the very desire to write well, to write artistically, betrayed the realist in spite of himself, and he became a romanticist. By the side of *Madame Bovary* we set *La Tentation de Saint Antoine* and *Salammbô*. Of Goncourt, Huysmans shrewdly remarked, "Goncourt l'a bien comprise, l'erreur du naturalisme, et il l'a évitée"; in *Madame Gervaisais*, as Arthur Symonds so penetratingly observes, Edmond and Jules de Goncourt have given us the soul of Rome, which Zola with all the documentation of *Rome* was unable to do. As regards Huysmans himself no man turned his face more steadfastly towards, and steeped his very being more saturatingly in, the faith and ideals of Mediævalism; even in 1884 when he published *A Rebours*, "Zola sentit tout de suite que le disciple sur lequel il comptait le lâchait. . . . Zola lui reproche d'avoir porté un coup terrible au naturalisme, et conseilla au déserteur de revenir à l'étude de mœurs"¹²; and Huysmans himself declared, "le naturalisme est fini. . . . La masturbation a été traitée, la Belgique vient de nous donner le roman de la syphilis, oui! Je crois que, dans la domaine de l'observation pure, on peut s'arrêter là!"¹³ Of Huysmans Zola generously allowed: "Tenez, il y en a un, d'écrivain, qui ne l'aime pas, le siècle, et qui le vomit d'une façon superbe, c'est Huysmans, dans *Là-Bas*, son feuilleton de l'*Echo de Paris*. Et il est clair, au moins, celui-là, et c'est avec cela un peintre d'une couleur et d'une intensité extraordinaires."¹⁴ Zola too, the master of realism, wrote his *La Faute de l'Abbé Mouret* and *Le Rêve*; he cast a wistful eye towards romanticism and complained half-playfully, half in earnest, that when



*Lorrivond advanced cautiously down the avenue,
as if fearful of disturbing his devotion*

THE GOTHIC SHRINE
Green's "Prophecy of Duncannon," 1824

he was engaged upon *Pot-Bouille* he could allow himself "No *bravura*, not the least lyrical treat." "My novel," he wrote in a letter from Grandcamp, August 24th, 1881, "does not give me any warm satisfactions, but it amuses me like a piece of mechanism with a thousand wheels, of which it is my duty to regulate the movement with the most minute care."¹⁵ In 1890 Rémy de Gourmont prophesied: "Je pourrais m'aventurer à dire que la littérature prochaine sera *mystique*. . . . Un peu d'encens, un peu de prière, un peu de latin liturgique, de la prose de Saint Bernard, des vers de Saint Bonaventure,—et des secrets pour exorciser M. Zola!"¹⁶

It is inevitable that throughout the centuries of literature the pendulum should swing, Romanticism-realism, and Realism-romanticism again; whilst the spirit of Romanticism in its immortality will assume a thousand varied shapes, sometimes a shape of exquisite beauty, sometimes a shape of wild extravagance with affectations that are almost vulgar and crude, whilst the body of Realism can but clothe itself in the prevailing modes and fashions of the hour and hold up a mirror to reflect what is passing around and about, often indeed exhibiting pictures of extraordinary interest and value, if seldom however visions of what is loveliest and best. Wherein seems to lie the reason why poets upon whom was imposed an artificial pseudo-classical form often became didactic in their art,¹⁷ or satirists. Pope himself, having necessarily accepted definite limitations, excelled in both these kinds, and not irrelevantly has Mr. Austin Dobson shrewdly observed that so supreme is the genius of Hogarth, the dramatist of the brush, who "without a school, and without a precedent . . . has found a way of expressing what he sees with the clearest simplicity, richness, and directness,"¹⁸ that we are apt to forget his "specific mission as a pictorial moralist and satirist."

Dr. F. H. Hedge has given it as his opinion that the Romantic feeling has its origin in wonder and mystery, the essence of Romanticism being Aspiration. "It is the sense of something hidden, of imperfect revelation. . . . The peculiarity of the classic style is reserve, self-suppression of the writer. . . . The Romantic is self-reflecting. . . . To the Greeks the world was a fact, to us it is a problem. . . . Byron is simply and wholly Romantic, with no tincture of classicism in his nature or works."¹⁹ Similarly Professor Boyesen had said: "Romanticism is really on one side retrogressive, as it seeks to bring back the past, and on the other hand, progressive as it seeks to break up the traditional order of things. . . . The conventional machinery of Romantic fiction; night, moonlight, dreams. . . . Romantic poetry invariably deals with longing, . . . not a definite desire, but a dim,

mysterious aspiration." ²⁰ These critics present us with a good deal of the truth, not the whole truth, perhaps, for volumes might be penned and no completely satisfactory definition of Romanticism in all its facets and phases arrived at, but at any rate their insistence upon Aspiration, yearning desire, mystery, wonder, certainly approaches near the heart of the matter, and we shall find that from those essential elements spring the characteristics of the Gothic Novel.

As Horace Walpole wrote so excellently well: "Visions, you know, have always been my pasture; and so far from growing old enough to quarrel with their emptiness, I almost think there is no wisdom comparable to that of exchanging what is called the realities of life for dreams. Old castles, old pictures, old histories, and the babble of old people, make one live back into centuries that cannot disappoint one. One holds fast and surely what is past." ²¹

Having thus reviewed some general and preliminary conceptions of Romanticism we may inquire what Romance meant during the latter half of the eighteenth century amongst us in England in the mind of the average observer, or more precisely in the mind of the observer who although no analytic virtuoso or psychologist, was rather above the average.

Horace Walpole, when he published *The Castle of Otranto* in 1764, termed his work "A Story. Translated by William Marshal, Gentleman From the Original Italian of Onuphrio Muralto," and in the second edition (of the next year) he calls it "A Gothic Story." ²² In a letter to the Earl of Hertford, whom he presents with a copy, he writes on January 27th, 1765, "the enclosed novel is much in vogue." On March 17th, 1765, he speaks of it in a letter to Joseph Warton as "partially an imitation of ancient romances; being rather intended for an attempt to blend the marvellous of old story with the natural of modern novels," and on the following day he reminds Élie de Beaumont, "I believe I told you that I had written a novel. . . . I have since that time published my little story . . . how will you be surprised to find a narrative of the most improbable and absurd adventures. How will you be amazed to hear that a country of whose good sense you have an opinion should have applauded so wild a tale! . . . To tell you the truth, it was not so much my intention to recall the exploded marvels of ancient romance, as to blend the wonderful of old stories with the natural of modern novels." ²³ *The Castle of Otranto* was the story to Walpole, primarily a Story, a Novel, a Narrative. It is true that in a letter to the Rev. William Cole, March 9th, 1765, ²⁴ he says: "Shall I even confess to you, what was the origin of this romance?" But he is writing very familiarly here.

The fact is that the term Romance ²⁵ as applied to a story or a work of fiction did not convey in the middle of the eighteenth century quite what we should understand by the term. The distinction, such as it is, may be vague; but a Romance in 1750 often carried with it uncertain suggestions of the Sagas of Chivalry, Amadis, the Palmerins, Tirante the White, as well as very distinct memories of *Artamenes; Or, The Grand Cyrus*, that Excellent Romance. In Ten Parts. Written By that Famous Wit of France, Monsieur de Scudery, Governour of *Nostre-Dame*, ²⁶ *Parthenissa*, "That most Fam'd Romance. *The Six Volumes Compleat*. Composed By the Right Honourable The Earl of Orrery," ²⁷ and *Cassandra* "the fam'd Romance." ²⁸ It must be remembered that the long-lived popularity in England of the Romances by La Calprénede and Mademoiselle de Scudéry was simply amazing. There are continual references. In *The Spectator*, No. 37, Addison among the books in Leonora's library notes *Cassandra*, *Cleopatra*, *Astræa*, "The Grand Cyrus, with a pin stuck in one of the middle pages," and "Clelia, which opened of itself in the place that describes two lovers in a bower." One of his lady correspondents (*Spectator*, No. 92), advised him to put "*Pharamond* at the head of my catalogue, and, if I think proper, to give the second place to *Cassandra*." In Farquhar's *The Constant Couple*, 1699, Lady Lurewell read *Cassandra*, dreamed of her lover all night, and in the morning made Verses. In *The Beaux Stratagem*, 1707, Archer candidly informs Mrs. Sullen, "Look'ye, Madam, I'm none of your *Romantick* Fools, that fight Gyants and Monsters for nothing"; whilst Aimwell exclaims "call me *Oroondates*, *Cesario*, *Amadis*, all that Romance can in a Lover paint"; Cesario being the son of Julius Cæsar and Cleopatra in "*that so much admir'd Romance intituled Cleopatra*," and not an allusion to *Twelfth Night* as editors of Farquhar will still persist in supposing. Pope's "advent'rous Baron"

to Love an Altar built,
Of twelve vast French Romances, neatly gilt,

and the poet himself gave a copy of the *Grand Cyrus* to Martha Blount. In 1705 Steele in his comedy *The Tender Husband: Or, The Accomplished Fools*, produced at Drury Lane in April of that year, satirized the passion for French Romances in his fair heroine Biddy Tipkin (created by Nance Oldfield) who on coming to Years of Discretion assumed the name Parthenissa and, since her case was "exactly the same with the Princess of the *Leontines* in *Clelia*," sighed to give "Occasion for a whole Romance in Folio" before one-and-twenty, whose reading, her Aunt Bersheba protested, was all "idle Romances of Fights and Battles of Dwarfs and Giants."

Until the middle of the eighteenth century (and even later) the translations of La Calprenède and Mademoiselle de Scudéry were still widely read in England as is proved by the famous novel of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox,²⁹ *The Female Quixote; or the Adventures of Arabella*, 1752, the humour of which must almost entirely be lost upon the reader who has not at least a very fair acquaintance with *Cassandra*, *Cleopatra*, *The Grand Cyrus*, *Clelia*, and the rest. Further we may remark that the Fourth Edition of Cotterell's *Cassandra* was published 5 Vols. 12mo, Price 15s. in 1739 by Richard Ware "at the Bible and Sun in Amen-Corner" and appears in his catalogue alongside novels by Mrs. Haywood, Mrs. Aubin, and *Robinson Crusoe*. *The Female Quixote* has been characterized as "an agreeable and ingenious satire upon the old romances; not the more ancient ones of chivalry, but the languishing love romances of the Calprenèdes and Scuderis." Arabella, the daughter of a nobleman living in a far retirement, is brought up in the country, and as she discovers a great fondness for reading she has the use of the Castle library, "in which unfortunately for her, were great store of romances, and, what was still more unfortunate, not in the original French, but very bad translations. . . . Her ideas, from the manner of her life, and the objects around her, had taken a romantic turn; and supposing romances were real pictures of life, from them she drew all her notions and expectations. By them she was taught to believe that love was the ruling principle of the world; that every other passion was subordinate to this; and that it caused all the happiness and miseries of life" (Chapter I). She lives then in the realm of romance, and her ideas, conversation, and manners are all based on the models of "the divine Mandane," "the inexorable Statira," Parisatis, Candace, "the admirable Clelia," "the fair Artemisa," "the beautiful Thalestris," Elismonda, Alcionida, Cleorante, Amalazontha, Cerinthe, Olympia, "the beauteous Agione," Albysinda, Placida, Arsinoe, and a thousand other whimsies. Thus she imagines Edward, a young under-gardener on her father's estate, to be "a person of sublime quality" who submits to that disguise in order to have the happiness of gazing on her charms. She dismisses a lover who does not know that Artaxerxes was the brother of Statira, and who makes the horrid mistake of supposing Orontes and Oroondates to be two several persons, not guessing that Oroondates, Prince of the Scythians, assumed the name Orontes and gave himself out as Prince of the Massagètes, to conceal his identity (in *Cassandra*). She engages an Abigail to relate the adventures of her mistress, which happen to be of a nature not fit to be talked of, and quite nonplusses a classical scholar by her acquaintance with the intimate details of Greek and

Roman history which by some chance neither Thucydides, nor Livy, nor Tacitus, nor Plutarch have chronicled. In a fit of heroics, whilst walking on the river bank at Twickenham, she imagines she is about to be abducted, and to imitate the renowned Clelia she plunges into the Thames intending to swim over it, as that heroine traversed the Tiber. Happily she is rescued, senseless and half-drowned. A dangerous fever is the result, and during her illness she is visited by a pious and learned divine whose solid discourse throughout her convalescence clears her imagination of its myriad extravagances and puts an end to her follies so that a serenity of mind is restored with health of body.

The catastrophe of Arabella's leap into the river was perhaps suggested to Mrs. Lennox by Adrien Thomas Perdou de Subigny's³⁰ satire *La fausse Clélie. Histoire française galante et comique*, 1670.³¹ This was translated into English as *The Mock-Clelia. Being a comical History of French Gallantrie and Novels. In Imitation of Dom [sic] Quixote. Translated out of French*, 8vo., 1678. Juliette d'Arviene imagines she is Clélie, and imitates the exploits of this peerless heroine, even to the extent of throwing herself into a canal which she supposes must be the Tiber.

As we have emphasized, by its continual allusions to, and lengthy quotations from French romances, *The Female Quixote* shows how deep-rooted was the love for these heroic volumes in England in 1750. As late as 1796 Robert Bage was able to write in the last of his six novels, *Hermesprong: or, Man as he is not*, that Miss Brown's mind "was adorned with all the literature which this learned age has produced for the service of the ladies. To the novels of the present day were added the Cassandras and Cleopatras—the classics of a century or two preceding" (Chapter I). There is a mild touch of satire, for even if Miss Brown were the daughter of a mercer in Exeter, she showed excessively genteel. Moreover young Gregory Glen "was allowed to read the sublime Cassandra to her, while she worked in the summer evenings in a little alcove at the bottom of the garden." "What draughts of love I drank!" he exclaims, "whilst I read the sublime meltings of the soul of Oroondates." Mrs. Barbauld, however, writing in 1810, criticizes the performance of Mrs. Lennox as being at a disadvantage, "namely, that the satire has now no object." She adds, however, with a bob at the Scudéry romances: "No doubt there were many things in them to admire; nor is it very improbable that, in the rage for reviving every thing that is old, they may make their appearance again in a modern quarto of hot-pressed paper, with a life and an engraving from the original portrait of Mad^{lle} Scudéry by Nanteuil, with her elegant verses under it."

In 1768 the Prologue, spoken by King, who acted Scribble, George Colman's *Polly Honeycombe*, produced at Drury Lane on December 5th, has the following lines :

ROMANCE might strike our grave Forefather's pomp,
But NOVEL for our Buck and lively Romp !
Cassandra's Folios now no longer read,
See, Two Neat Pocket Volumes in their stead !

The novel, which was at first romantic or at least picaresque, soon partook of a certain realism. Then gradually fiction grew more realistic and less romantic, until romance again asserted its sway in the efflorescence of the Gothic Novel, where it was the supreme quality, and in the Sentimental Novel where it was blended with such an undercurrent of contemporary life as should make the fair reader delightedly exclaim, "Why, all this might easily happen to me !". She could not, mayhap, be very well able to imagine herself being carried off by a Montoni to a remote castle in the robber-haunted Apennines, or abducted by a treacherous Montaldo to a rock, furthest of the Isles of Tremiti, like Ariadne in *The Bandit Chief*; or even confined in a sullen cloister beneath the rigid rule of some ancient devotee, Mother S. Agatha or the cruel cadaverous Superior of S. Ursula. None the less it was clearly within the bounds of possibility that our heroine might so fascinate the heart of some bad bold baronet, that as she was returning from the Hotwells assembly or the Lower Rooms at Bath, he would whirl her away in his four-horsed chaise to the heavy Gothic magnificence of Arundel Hall amid the loneliest Cornish moors, where a grim-visaged steward would fit the rôle of gaoler well enough and a mysterious silent housekeeper prove as veritable a dragon-duenna as any Abbess of the Abruzzi. Did not the elder O'Farrel abduct his innocent victim Mrs. Parsons' Lucy from Lady Campley, Mrs. Murray and Henrietta, even in Whitehall itself, and hurry her off via Harwich and Ostend as far as Verona before she was rescued? Did he not even contrive to kidnap her from Verona to Vicenza, so strange and extravagant were his schemes? Life—on the printed page—was full of thrills !

It was by a happy stroke that Mrs. Charlotte Smith gave her collection of tales from the *Causes Célèbres*, such a title as *The Romance of Real Life*, 1787, selecting from Gayot de Pitavel and Richter narratives that "might lead us to form awful ideas of the force and danger of the human passions." *The Romance of Real Life* was a first-rate "selling" title.

It is possible indeed to some extent to differentiate between the

"terror-Gothic" and the "sentimental-Gothic," but it would scarcely be possible to say which of the two kinds proved most popular. Among the "terror-Gothic" are certainly to be classed the huge majority of novels that owe their inspiration to a German source, even if they are not—as so often proves the case—direct translations from the German. To give long lists were tedious, but we may say that the work of Matthew Gregory Lewis (generally speaking), is to be accounted "terror-Gothic," as also are such novels as—to give some fifteen titles—*The Necromancer*; or, *The Tale of the Black Forest*, 1794: *Horrid Mysteries*, 1796: *The History of Rinaldo Rinaldini, Captain of Banditti*, 1800 (all three translations from the German): George Walker's *The Three Spaniards*, 1800: *The Eve of San Pietro*, anonymous, 1804: G. T. Morley's *Deeds of Darkness*; or, *The Unnatural Uncle*, 1805: W. H. Ireland's *Gondex the Monk*, 1805: Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya*; or, *The Moor*, 1806: T. P. Lathy's *The Invisible Enemy*; or, *The Mines of Wielitska*, 1806: Charles Robert Maturin's *The Fatal Revenge*; or, *The Family of Montorio*, 1807: Edward Montague's *The Demon of Sicily*, 1807: T. J. Horsley Curties' *The Monk of Udolpho*, 1807; Mary Anne Radcliffe's *Manfroné*; or, *The One-Handed Monk*, 1809: Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*, 1820; William Child Green's *Abbot of Monserrat*; or, *The Pool of Blood*, 1826. (We may note that Ainsworth's *Rookwood* was published in 1834.)

The ingenious Richard Sickelmore has a romance *Osrick*; or, *Modern Horrors*, 1809, of which there is more to be said in a later chapter.

Among the "sentimental-Gothic" novels we can list some very famous titles, for example Mrs. Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline*, or, *the Orphan of the Castle*, 1788; *Ethelinde*, or, *the Recluse of the Lake*, 1789; *Celestina*, 1791; Mrs. Roche's *The Children of the Abbey*, 1796; *Clermont*, 1798; *The Tradition of the Castle*, or, *Scenes in the Emerald Isle*, 1824; Miss Cuthbertson's *Romance of the Pyrenees*, 1803; *Santo Sebastiano*, or, *The Young Protector*, 1806; *Forest of Montalbano*, 1810. Indeed, all the novels of these three ladies (as of very many more) might well be described as "sentimental-Gothic." In the *Forest of Montalbano*, however, there is a distinct leaning to "terror-Gothic." "Sentimental-Gothic," again, are Mrs. Parsons' *Lucy*, 1794, and *The Girl of the Mountains*, 1795; the anonymous *Eloise de Montblanc*, 1796; Mrs. Eleanor Sleath's *The Orphan of the Rhine*, 1798; *Ariel*, or, *the Invisible Monitor*, 1801; *Vesuvia*, or *Anglesea Manor*, 1807; *Rosalie*, or, *The Castle of Montalabretti* (very inclining to "terror"), 1811; Agnes Lancaster's *The Abbess of Valtiera*, or, *The Sorrows of a Falsehood*, 1816; Catherine G. Ward's *The Cottage on the Cliff*, *A Sea Side Story* (an

elegant and enchanting specimen), 1823; Hannah Maria Jones' *Emoreland, or, The Maid of the Valley*, 1829.

So easily, however, do the two kinds, the terror-Gothic and the sentimental-Gothic, blend in one novel that it is often impossible to consign any particular fiction to the one category. The work of Mrs. Meeke, for example, and much of the work of Mrs. Helme, might be called sentimental with a strong admixture (in many instances) of terror. Mrs. Meeke whilst writing of a contemporary Duke of Orkney with sons at Eton and Oxford none the less creates a Gothic atmosphere, which she contrives to supply with an almost individual colouring.

Mrs. Radcliffe's genius is so great that it may be considered to stand above and apart, yet if we must analyse her romances we shall find both terror and a sentimental interest.

A third kind of Gothic novel should be particularized, the historical. As this is to be dealt with in detail later it will suffice to say that historical Gothic does not so much derive its inspiration from Leland's *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury*, 1762, all-important pioneer as this romance is but rather from Sophia Lee's *The Recess*, 1783-85, a romance of the days of Queen Elizabeth, who herself appears in these pages together with a number of other well-known persons of the reign. Indeed, the skill with which Miss Lee introduces us to famous characters almost rivals that of Harrison Ainsworth and his vast gallery. *The Recess*, as will be emphasized in another chapter, is a work of considerable note, and exercised upon the novel of the day an influence which yet waits to receive its due meed of recognition and esteem. Miss Lee was followed by a lengthy train. In 1790 Mrs. A. M. Mackenzie published her *Monmouth*; in 1794 appeared the anonymous *Edward Courcy*, a tale of the Wars of the Roses; in 1795 Anne Yearsley issued *The Royal Captives*, a solution of the Man in the Iron Mask; and in the same year appeared *The Duke of Clarence*, an Historical Novel, by E. M. F.; in 1802 was published Anna Millikin's tale of the twelfth century, *Plantagenet, or Secrets of the House of Anjou*; Leslie Armstrong in 1806 went even further down the years with *The Anglo-Saxons, or the Court of Ethelwald*, and a few months earlier Francis Lathom had issued one of the best of his novels, *The Mysterious Freebooter; or, The Days of Queen Bess*, who appears *in propria personâ* on the scene. A quarter of a century later, in 1830, Lathom wrote "A Romantic Legend of the Days of Anne Boleyn," *Mystic Events; or, The Vision of the Tapestry*, chapters in which as we shall see, not only Anne Boleyn and her father Sir Thomas Boleyn play their part, but Henry VIII is an actor in the tale, whilst we catch a glimpse of Wolsey and Queen

Catherine of Arragon. Only a dozen years more and all these historical personages were drawn by Ainsworth with much detail in *Windsor Castle*.²

The historical-Gothic novel for the most part can easily be distinguished from the historical novel which, often rather clumsily, follows in the footsteps of Scott, and even before *Ivanhoe*, *The Monastery*, *The Abbot* and *Kenilworth*, there appeared such Historical Novels as Miss Prickett's *Warwick Castle*, "containing, amongst other desultory information, the Descent and Achievements of the ancient Earls of Warwick, from the earliest period of their creation to the present time. With some Account of Warwick, Birmingham, Lemington, etc., etc., interspersed with Pieces of local Poetry, incidental Biography, and Anecdotes of English History"; Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy: 3 vols., 1817.

Curiously enough Mrs. Radcliffe's *Gaston de Blondville, or The Court of Henry III Keeping Festival in Ardenne*, written in the winter of 1802, but not issued (posthumously) until 1826, can hardly be called a historical-Gothic novel, even although not intending to publish these chapters she gratified herself by the introduction of a true spectre. It does not appear that she was inspired by Scott, but she writes in a vein which looks forward to the earlier work of Ainsworth, particularly *Crichton* (1837) and *The Tower of London* (1840), and I think it probable that he was much influenced by *Gaston de Blondville*, since he was a professed admirer of Mrs. Radcliffe and steeped himself in her romantic pages. *Sir John Chiverton*, 1826, is obviously modelled upon *Gaston de Blondville*, but this must be regarded as mainly (if not almost entirely) the work of John Partington Aston, and Ainsworth had a very small share in the book.

In William Heseltine's *The Last of the Plantagenets*: "An Historical Romance, Illustrating Some of the Public Events, and Domestic and Ecclesiastical Manners of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," published in 1829, that is to say, a year before *Mystic Events*, although there is distinctly a Gothic atmosphere in several passages, archæology is beginning to assert itself, and we meet with such terms as "*genouillières*, or knee-pieces"; "*sollerets*, or polished iron shoes"; "white wassell-bread"; "an Esquire or *Constillier*"; "*bucque*, or mantle"; "the courteous *Antè* and *Retrò* reverence"; "Paske-tide"; and many more. The story, which is well-written, shows the influence of Scott. It tells the adventures of Richard Plantagenet from 1485 to 1549. Richard, the son of King Richard III, has been brought up in obscurity at Ely Monastery, and is only recognized by his father on the eve of Bosworth. The flight of Lord Lovel after the battle of Stoke enters

into the narrative, together with the concealment of that nobleman in secret cell at Minster Lovel, and his death there.

Perhaps Anne Fuller most candidly represents the attitude of the Gothic novelist to history when in the preface to *Alan Fitz-Osborne, a Historical Tale*, 1787, she declares: "I mean not to offend the majesty of sacred truth by giving her but a secondary place in the following pages. Necessity, stronger than prudence, obliges me to give fiction the pre-eminence; but . . . I have preserved her genuine purity unblemished as circumstances would admit," and necessity in this case had the upper hand all along the line. T. J. Horsley Curties placed his first novel, *Ethelwina, or, The House of Fitz-Auburne*, 1799, "In the reign of the illustrious Edward the Third," and early in the story the monarch visits Auburne Castle, but the author's sole purpose is "to fascinate the senses with a delusive picture of 'times for ever past.'" Lathom has a shrewd observation in the Preface to *The Mysterious Freebooter*, answering the reviewers who gird at Romance for assuming "the right of placing deceased characters in situations through which they never passed, and of giving to historical facts false dates, and erroneous terminations." He answers such cavillers "'A Romance,' says Dr. Johnson, 'means a fiction, a tale of wild adventures of love and war'; which explanation must, I think, be sufficient to prevent anyone from reading them under the idea of gaining from them correct historical information; and prepare them to encounter those anachronisms and misstatements which the author has been guilty of, for the purpose of augmenting or enriching his tale."

Ethelwina, which Horsley Curties had sent "into the world as an orphan, whose father feared to acknowledge it, under his *Christian* appellation of HORSLEY," proved very popular with the votaries of the Circulating Library, but was rather scurvily handled by the reviewers, whereupon in the Preface³³ to his second Romance, *Ancient Records, or The Abbey of Saint Oswythe* (1801), Horsley Curties remarks: "As this species of writing has of late been feebly attacked, I will venture a few observations on the subject.—Authors of Novels are nearly allied to those of Romance—are twin-sisters, and should be equally allied in affection; but as sisters will sometimes envy and disagree when the one has been more admired than the other, so the Writers of Novels, jealous of us humble architects, will not suffer us to build our air castles, or mine our subterranean caverns, unmolested." The sentence is something of a hermaphrodite, but the meaning is quite plain. He continues: "Let me enlarge a little further on this theme.—Ought the female Novelist, in order to display a complete knowledge of human nature, to degrade that delicate timidity, that shrinking innocence

which is the loveliest boast of womanhood, in drawing characters which would ruin her reputation to be acquainted with?—Ought she to describe scenes which bashful modesty would blush to conceive an idea, much less avow a knowledge of?—Oh no! let the chaste pen of female delicacy disdain such unworthy subjects;—leave to the other sex a description of grovelling incidents, debased characters, and low pursuits:—there is still a range wide and vast enough for fanciful imagination." The significant point here is that Horsley Curties emphatically differentiates between the writer of romances and the writer of novels. A little earlier, indeed, he acclaims Mrs. Radcliffe, "*Udolpho's* unrivalled Foundress" as the finest and supreme writer of romances.

In an important note upon the First Dialogue of *The Pursuits of Literature*, first published in 1794, Thomas James Mathias is very severe upon "Mrs. Charlotte Smith, Mrs. Inchbald, Mrs. Mary Robinson, Mrs. etc., etc.," who, though all of them "very ingenious ladies," are "too frequently *whining* or *frisking* in novels, till our girls' heads turn wild with impossible adventures, and are now and then tainted with democracy, and sometimes with infidelity and loose principles. Not so the mighty magician of THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO, bred and nourished by the Florentine Muses in their sacred solitary caverns, amid the paler shrines of Gothic superstition, and in all the dreariness of enchantment; a poetess whom Ariosto would with rapture have acknowledged as the

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I would say a word on Romances and Novels. . . . No works can be read with more delight and advantage, when they are selected with discrimination; they animate and improve the mind." Mathias quite justly lays down that it is *necessary* to read Cervantes, *Gil Blas* and "that great comic Epic poem" *Tom Jones*. He allows that "Mrs. Charlotte Smith has great poetical powers, and a pathos which commands attention." He praises Miss Burney, and concludes: "I cannot descend among all the modern farrago of novels, which are too often 'receipts to make w——s.'" The first portion of this note, so far as the quotation from Ariosto, was written in 1794; the latter part was added in 1798. We have here, then, the same distinction drawn between romances and novels.

The author of that amusing satire *The Age* (1810), "A Poem: Moral, Political, and Metaphysical," in the rubric to his Book VII has: "Soliloquy of a Votaress of Romance. The Fashion of Romances

Described. Novelists. Description of their Productions." He gives a description of the Temple of romance : ³⁴

Here vot'ries crowd of all conditions
To view the fleeting exhibitions ;
And, well as crazy brain permits
Sketch down each vision as it flits :
While deeper mysteries are brewing
They see at first a gothic ruin.
(This seems to be a rule of late
From which none dare to deviate),
'Tis castle large with turrets high
Intruding always on the sky
On ev'ry tow'r, to please the sight,
The moon bestows a speck of light . . .
The stairs and passages so wind,
The way's impossible to find ;
And who to venture in them durst
Must always lose himself at first.
The windows close, thro' which, about
Each hour, some curious Ghost peeps out ;
As if he had a slight suspicion
Folks might walk in without permission : . .
Woods all around are thickly set
Which 'stead of green, are black as jet.
Beyond these rise a ridge of rocks
At which imagination shocks. . . .

The hero follows, and later the heroine,

Next comes a monk with disposition
Endeav'ring solely for perdition ;
Without design or end in view
For which the devil's work he'll do.

Novelists are rather cruelly and unfairly ridiculed :

These novelists who boast one school
Can ne'er depart a general rule :
To make (before one page they move)
Two creature fall in fits of love :
One always masculine in gender
The other female, and more tender.

The course of true love never did run smooth :

Starts up a father, guardian, aunt,
Morose and ever slyly creeping,
Suspiciously thro' keyholes peeping ;
As hateful as the pen can draw
In hideousness without a flaw :
For these in novels hold that place
Which wizards in romances grace.

In a note upon this passage the author of *The Age* gives us very precise instructions how we may nicely distinguish between the romance and the novel, together with a useful receipt for turning out

into the other. He writes as follows : " The conduct of the poet in considering romances and novels separately, may be thought singular by those who have penetration to see that a novel may be made out of a romance, or a romance out of a novel with the greatest ease, by scratching out a few terms, and inserting others. Take the following, which may, like machinery in factories, greatly accelerate the progress of the divine art.

From any romance to make a novel.

Where you find :—

A castle	put	An house.
A cavern		A bower.
A groan		A sigh.
A giant		A father.
A blood-stained dagger		A fan.
Howling blasts		Zephyrs.
A knight		A gentleman without whiskers.
A lady who is the heroine		Need not be changed, being versatile.
Assassins		Killing glances.
A monk		An old steward.
Skeletons, skulls, &c.		Compliments, sentiments, &c.
A lamp		A candle.
A magic book sprinkled with blood		A letter bedewed with tears.
Mysterious voices		Abstruse words (easily found in a Dictionary.)
A secret oath		A tender hint accompanied with naiveté.
A gliding ghost		A usurer, or an attorney.
A witch		An old housekeeper.
A wound		A kiss.
A midnight murder		A marriage.

The same table of course answers for transmuting a novel into a romance.

It however must be acknowledged that something is required from the author's judgement. Though the loom is prepared, none but the weaver can make the web. So the mind, educated in the school of nature, and afterwards sent to the college of fancy ; refined, rectified,

and sublimed, is necessary for the formation of this intellectual tapestry. There is that ardour necessary which laughs at impossibilities ; that ingenuity and persuasion which bring together and reconcile those circumstances that were justly considered time immemorial the most irreconcilable ; and that force which bursts the whole asunder when it can be continued no longer, or that the author is losing his way in his own labyrinth.

As to the plots of mystery which are inseparable from these productions, there is one rule in forming them, which is this : For the author to suppose secretly, under any thing ostensible, whatever it is almost impossible could be there : which the reader never can suspect, unless by the extraordinary shuffling and fuss commonly used about that part, as in *legerdemain*."

The poem gives lengthy and very clever descriptions of a hero and a heroine in a novel together with amplest directions how to manage the whole conventional business. Of the lady we are told :

If out she trips, we always find
Some Zephyr fans, not vulgar wind ;
Contriv'd by Æolus's throat,
On which her "silver locks" may float ;
Or "roseate garments" and her hair
Together take a dance in air.
She never walks, she always *trips*
And 'stead of running, *wildly skips*.
To pass away her leisure hour,
From nature's breast she plucks a flow'r ;
On which should drop of rain appear,
The lover takes it for a tear,
With rapture sips it tho' thin-pated
Is by the draught intoxicated.
The maid immediate to her spark
Makes some original remark ;
Such sentiment thro' out it glows !
About the fragrance of the rose ;
And of its prickles, and its thorn ;
Then flies away in virgin scorn :
But reasons why she capers so
The most inquisitive can't know.
For pranks like these, now frown, now smile,
Show soul refin'd and versatile,
So whimsical, so wildly gay
Like monkey or an April day.

A good deal of ungenerous exaggeration seems inseparable from early nineteenth century satire, but we can easily enough discount all that, and it does not in the slightest affect our enjoyment of Mrs. Charlotte Smith, Mrs. Roche, Mrs. Bennett, Mrs. Meeke, Miss Cuthbertson, Mrs. Ward, to find certain contemporary conventions of the novelist, modes and phrases in themselves quite pleasing and often

felicitous, laughed at by Pasquin and Marfurio, even though a disagreeable tang of malice not unseldom sour the jest. The lampoons are interesting, and often accidentally throw light upon the literary theories and fashions of the moment.

Of romances, the author of *The Age* remarks :

In these days, the Gothic sect
Can scribble with a good effect,
Whene'er these tales like lighted match
Can fire imagination's thatch.

And concerning the novels he adds less than twenty lines later :

In physiognomy we trace
The vestige of a Gothic race.

The word "Gothic," which was to play so important a part in later days, and which now has so very definite and particular a meaning (especially in relation to literature) originally conveyed the idea of barbarous, tramontane and antique, and was merely a term of reproach and contempt. From its application to architecture—and Gothic building, as we shall see, was long enough held in very low esteem—it came to connote almost anything mediæval, and could be referred to almost any period until the middle, or even the end, of the seventeenth century. In such extension, of course, it comes loosely to signify little more than old-fashioned, grannam and out-of-date.³⁵

In reference to architecture, the sovran disdain with which Gothic was regarded is repeatedly emphasized. John Evelyn, a virtuoso of the most cultured talent, writing *An Account of Architects & Architecture*, in *A Parallel of Architecture Both Ancient & Modern* by Roland Freart St. De Chambray, folio, 1664, in his Epistle Dedicatory instructs Sir John Denham : "You will know, that all the mischiefs and absurdities in our modern *Structures* proceed chiefly from our busie and *Gotic* triflings in the *Composition* of the *Five Orders*." Gothic is unworthy to be called an Order, those who envisaged it were "low and reptile *Souls*" severely to be reprobated on account of the "idle and impertinent *Grotesks*, with which they have ever infected all our *Modern Architecture*" (p. 3), and no words are bad enough for those who dare "to *Engotish* (as one may say) after their own capricious Humour" (p. 5). Evelyn speaks of "*Arched Doors or Windows*" (p. 131), and observes, "This *Barbarity* therefore we may look upon as purely *Gotique*."